

THE WAR FOR THE UNION.

FROM WASHINGTON.

From Our Own Correspondent.

WASHINGTON, June 5, 1861.

In much that is old, and more that is new, in what we have learned of the past or have observed of the present, there is one marked and peculiar spectacle of which, in all time gone by, there have been but two resemblances. The crusading host gathered under one leading banner the enthusiasm, the piety, and self-devotion of all Europe. Fired by a passion which seemed but a higher form of frenzy, the barrier of national divisions, the jealousy of warring nations and the separation and confusion of dialects and languages, all yield to a real which, epidemic and contagious, brought the disinterested nationalities, in rudeness and refinement, under barbarian chieftain and crowned king to the rescue of the Holy Sepulcher from the hand of the Infidel. But this was but the free offering of service and life to a cause which came to the mind fervid in a religion which addressed the eye in the scenic pagantry of ritual, rather than the heart in the teachings of a pure faith—and almost brutal in a ferocity as yet wanting for that slow education which, at a later period, was to adorn knightlyhood. The vassal followed his leader, who dreamed of glory, earthly and immortal, and saw visions of conquest and empire in the Oriental possessions of a rival faith, which, hardly more earthly and sensual than the practices of his own, came from the broken cisterns fashioned by man, and not from the heavenly fountain from which flowed the oracles of God.

The centuries which followed, with their proximal attacks of energy, stimulated by fanaticism, left Europe to fall into its distinct governments and fight in its ever-recurring wars, in separate armies, or in coalitions of limited extent, formed against a more powerful potentate.

In our time, under one commanding and controlling genius, binding to his destiny the power of all that had away from the Bay of Biscay to the Balkan—each Monarch, Prince, and Duke marched in his rally the contingent of a Feudal Lord whose men-at-arms were of the gentle blood of royal and noble veins. This was not voluntary, but held to alliance, only by the strong hand and the stern will. Compulsion to the ruler and conscription to the soldier held to his behests the fearful might of contumacious nations whose population were made the spoils of habitations and the destroyers of human life. The world will not soon see such another magnificent procession as that mighty march which descended into the valley of the Niemen, gorgeous in all the panoply of war and gilded by a sunrise which was soon to pass behind a cloud charged with the thunder and whirlwind of a doom, frightful and wonderful, as had been the footsteps which led to a catastrophe ending in the sublime of calamity.

With the close of that sepulcher of frost, flame and the slayer, into which they marched to die beheaded on the steppes of inhospitable provinces, to be butchered at Borodino, or buried in the icy flood of the Berezina, went out the last grand gathering of distant kindred and diverse language, till upon our shores in the free and uncompromising proffer of life, we assemble again an army in which the sons of men who fought at Dresden and shouted "Vive l'Empereur" in the last fatal march upon St. Dizier, salute our unfurled flag, and mark time to the national air which salutes its raising.

With us now, for life and death, not invited but seeking the post of danger, is a mingling of tongues and races, more comprehensive in scope than even the campaign of disaster and death against the last contumacious resistant of universal empire, whose capital had not trembled to the stern footfall of the Old Guard of the Corsican Emperor. From the Shannon and from the Danube—from the Rhine and the Rhone, and more, from the fords of Norway and the firths of Scotland, come those who have sought freedom under our flag, and now stretch out the hand to help to rescue in alarm and danger. Our regiments bear names dear to Liberty, both of the living and of the dead. Yankee Doodle and the Marseillaise, the *Ranz des Vaches* and the Rhine Song, mingle their stirring refrains as the steady ranks beat with even step to the cadence of their bars.

It will be something, in the grander acts of this drama, to tell to our children—those of us who survive—of the holiday pomp which delighted our eyes in the mustering of native born and foreign birth—the bugle and the burr—the guttural and the "soft bastard Latin" of Tuscan sweetness, as they defiled past in the march to repossess our own territory, held from our jurisdiction by rebellion, with the glow of pride on their foreheads and the glitter of sunshine upon their polished steel. Dreamer of evil omen, doubter of the wisdom which is from on High, and holds nations in the hollow of His hand, see in this the sure and certain triumph, for which the world is waiting, and for which it shall not wait in vain.

Emancipation has left the eastern shores of the Atlantic, where it has done its work; the step of its progress treads upon the paths of retiring oppression. Here, where the people first took power into their hands and founded a polity, which rested upon the equal and impartial participation of all, building an image of worship—whose feet were part iron and part clay—the firstlings of the heart shall now become the firstlings of the hand, to the true liberty which has been, heretofore, but a fiction and a false pretense.

Across the ocean, each people, in its distinct and distant action, has done its work. Here the gathered men of all of these divergent communities assemble under our grand and cohesive organization to win the last of fields in the long conflict.

Washington may stand with forces in front and flank and rear—Virginia fermenting in a hesitation which restrains, and Maryland festering in a treacherous which holds to an external quiet with sedition infecting half the population, and waiting only the favoring circumstance and time to aid in overwhelming, by an intestine eruption, the citadel of authority—yet still, with all these portents of evil, and with darkness upon the horizon, there is yet a spanning rainbow of promise which speaks peace to the future, and is the pledge of present safety in our peril. Upon the mountain tops are the messengers of glad tidings, and rapturous to our patient but longing ears are the promises of their life and the rushing of their wings.

And now let me recur to a subject which can-

not be too strongly pressed on the action of the military authorities. It is the substitution of martial for civil jurisdiction. It is, to me, passing strange that, with a full knowledge of what is before and about them, they will continue to keep terms which may involve the greatest of all disasters. One half of this city is false to the Government, and is giving, in every way it can, aid and comfort to the enemy. I should like the protection of my revolver and feel more safe with it than with the police force to defend me in my extremity. I cannot write all that I know, and what the Administration must know, of that which is in their own Departments. Nor can I go to them and urge to the performance of a tardy act which, it seems, ordinary foresight would have suggested as an early necessity. But I can speak to the people, in whom there is the safety and deliverance from this long warring in the wilderness. To their influence upon the chosen ruler here is to come the conduct and settlement, in the small and great events of the movement, be the struggle long or short; and from them I claim an audience when I speak in their language of what is dear to them as honor, property, or life, and which they are to hold in their courage or basely surrender in their fear.

Cheating the Departments.

Correspondence of The N. Y. Tribune.

WASHINGTON, June 4, 1861.

For years past a gigantic system of jobbery and corruption has been growing up in connection with the Administrative branches of the Government. The demoralization of our politics has been largely due to the corrupt practices which maintain themselves for years into the political administration, found their disgraceful culmination during the last year of Mr. Buchanan's term of office. Our whole political system has been made to revolve about a few grand schemes of plunder. The institution of a Government Printing House has, we trust, forever put an end to the disgusting exposure of frauds to which we had become accustomed in connection with the public printing. Hardly second to this, as a means of fraudulently taking money from the Treasury, and putting it in the pockets of political favorites, though not made to play so important a part in the direction of political movements—the contracts for furnishing stationery to the several Departments, and to the two Houses of Congress. The door to collusion and corruption is left wide open by the custom of issuing proposals for "Classes" embracing several "Items," instead of making each item a class by itself. The same system is followed in advertisements of some of the bureaus of the Army and Navy, and wherever proposals are issued in this form, it may be taken for granted that bids made in good faith will not be successful, however reasonable in themselves, and advantageous to the Government.

Take, for example, the proposals of the Treasury Department for the last year for stationery. "Class No. 1, Paper," embraces 18 "items," the first five of which are as follows:

- Item 1, 100 reams folio-put, satin finish, faint-lined and trimmed, of the very best quality. \$750
- Item 2, 100 reams extra large paper, satin finish, faint-lined and trimmed, of the very best quality. \$750
- Item 3, 20 reams white cap paper, machine-made, faint-lined and trimmed, of the very best quality. \$100
- Item 4, 20 reams cap paper, blue-lined, hand-made, faint-lined, garden-pattern, commonly known as dispatch or mail paper, of the very best quality. \$100
- Item 5, 500 reams quarto paper, white, highly glazed, and hand-colored, faint-lined on three sides, and of the very best quality. \$1,000

Now, it is to be remembered that in all such proposals the contract is assigned to the bidder making the lowest bid. Let us see how it works in the case of the above.

The lowest bidder sits down and makes up his bid, on the basis of a profit of 10 or 15 per cent, as the case may be, upon all the articles called for, and in the amounts specified in this class. But the bidder who has been posted, that in fact, not more than two or three reams, perhaps none at all, of the kind of paper described under item 1, will be used, and he bids on this at 50 cents per ream, when its market value is, say \$5. This makes his bid for that item only \$50. Of the second "item," 150 reams, satin finish, none will be called for, and he proposes for this at, we will say, \$1 per ream, and for this "item" his bid is \$150. But of the kind described in the third item only twenty reams are called for. This item reads the same as item 2, except that, instead of satin finish, the words machine-made are substituted. Every one knows that there is no paper to be had in this country except machine-made, and the third item is thus identical with the second. This paper, described under the third item, and of which only twenty reams are called for, is really the kind that will be used in large quantities, and on this the bidder, who is in collusion with the Stationery Clerk or some other officer of the Department, bids six, seven, or eight dollars per ream.

Item 4, calls for hand-made paper, an article, as remarked above, of which there is none in the market, nor has there been for years. The dishonest bidder puts in for this again at a merely nominal rate, and then furnishes the article described, except that it is machine-made, when called for, at its own price, inasmuch as hand-made paper was contemplated in his bid, and of course, for articles outside of the contract, he may charge such price as he pleases, with no limit but his own rapacity, or the extent of the guilty complicity of the parties in the Department acting with him. In items 5 and 6, there is the same ruse as in items 2 and 3, the paper of which none will be used, being called for in large quantity, while the following item, which describes the paper really used, is called for only in small quantity. It is the same all through these "classes," one item being made to act as cover for the fraud practiced in relation to another.

Now let us see how the bids on the items considered will foot up, on the part of the honest bidder, and the one acting in collusion with the Department, respectively.

The latter bids on	
Item 1, 100 reams at \$5.....	\$750
Item 2, 100 reams at \$1.....	100
Item 3, 20 reams at \$5.....	100
Item 4, 20 reams at \$1.....	20
Item 5, 500 reams at \$2.....	1,000
Item 6, 500 reams at \$2.....	1,000
Making an aggregate of \$1,170 against one of \$310.	

This is no mere supposition. A bidder for one of these contracts put in, a short time since, a bid aggregating between \$1,000 and \$5,000; but a competitor, whose aggregate bid was something less than \$2,000, received the contract. The following year, the party first named put in a bid for the same lot, which amounted in the aggregate to only \$1,400, while his successful competitor of the year before, supposing that he had killed off all opposition, and determined to make a still larger haul upon the Treasury, put in a bid amounting to some \$1,000. The former of course received the contract this time, and made out of it \$11,000.

This is a sample of the operations by which the Treasury has been depleted during the rule of the Democratic party. This system of jobbery is not confined to the class of contracts now under consideration, but extends into every Bureau, almost, from which contracts are given. An illustration of this occurred some time since in connection with the Navy-Yard at Norfolk. Proposals were issued by the Bureau of Yards and Docks for the supplies of bolts, screws, etc., for that yard, and among the items was "100 tons of railroad iron." One bidder put in for this at \$5 per ton, when the article in question was worth \$80 per ton. Of course he got the contract. It happened, however, that 10 tons of railroad iron was actually required toward the close of the year, and a requisition for it was made on this contractor. By the terms of the proposals a contractor failing to supply any article called for is liable in half the amount of the article called for, at the price mentioned in his bid. The contractor accordingly paid \$50 for iron for failing to supply

it, and left the commandant to supply himself at the usual rates elsewhere. The contractor cleared \$10,000 by this contract.

In many cases the terms in the proposals which seem to guard the public interest are only cunningly-devised evasions made for the benefit of favored contractors. But how are these abuses to be remedied? By issuing proposals in all instances, making each item a separate class, and requiring bids to be put in for each separately. This has been the course pursued by that honest officer, Asbury Dickens, Secretary of the Senate for years past, and this year for the first time the same course has been pursued by Col. Forney in his proposals for the supply of the immense contracts for the House stationery.

The general adoption of this plan throughout the Departments would save incalculable sums to the Nation, and should be insisted on at a time like this, of all others. Let there be no hasty, inconsiderate action, but a thorough overhauling on the part of every head of Department, and let the fraud and corruption which has insinuated itself into every branch of the Administration be ended, and instead the different Departments administered in good faith, and economically.

AMERICAN AFFAIRS IN FRANCE.

From Our Own Correspondent.

PARIS, 24th May, 1861.

While I was writing to you a week ago to-day, there was a meeting of Americans going on in Mr. Sanford's parlor. It was a patriotic gun-meeting. The Rev. Mr. McClintock and another said a few words, and then the subscription began; in twenty minutes about 20,000 francs were subscribed. The largest subscriptions, perhaps, were those of our three American painters here, Cranch, Dana, and May, who each set themselves down for a 500 franc picture. Mr. Sanford, our Minister to Belgium, lays out his first year's salary in artillery—a very apt discharge of his duty as a Danbury man. Mr. Swan, of Philadelphia, has also, I am told, bought a gun or two, as the best panacea for our intestinal troubles. The informal improvised meeting of last Friday was noticed in a brief newspaper paragraph of next day's *Galignani*; whereupon "some Southern Statesholders have chosen to take offense at any mention of such a meeting at all, and had the presumption to insert in a scurrilous and libelous recommendation being inserted in that strictly neutral newspaper." The recommendation, thus qualified by "Father Front," in his Paris correspondence with *The London Globe*, was refused insertion by *Galignani*, but got to print, in translation, in *Le Pays*, the organ of the Slave Power. It is signed De Leon, late Consul of the United States in Egypt. The late Consul in the Land of Egypt his recommendation is more foolish than scurrilous—not but what it is scurrilous. He declares such meetings as that in Mr. Sanford's parlor, to be in bad taste, not to say illegal as held in disregard of the neutral position of France; but De Leon tells that quite small portion of the world that reads *Le Pays*, the South American would hold just such a meeting to buy guns here, if they were not all gone or sent long by way of New-York to the guns (the guns that were "belonged to" and "protected" the South Carolina and Georgian patriots for stolen—a few months ago).

This unique French Pro-Slavery organ, *Le Pays*, emerges and re-emerges from M. Girard's articles; this is the property of the Proprietor of Falsehoods, a Founding Hospital, Infant-School, and Infirmary, all in one. Since it is sold or hired out at Senator Benjamin's suggestion to the Southern interest, it has, with its new master, got a new name, one Girard, who beats poor Monsieur Paul Requet du Bellet all hollow. Paul, to be sure, was not of the slightest, nor even in the slightest danger of going mad with too much learning. But Paul was honest, and his wish to become the C. S. A. Minister to the French Court an excusable weakness. It is not worth the while to lumber on with long extracts from M. Girard's articles; this country has had too much of his kind of writing, and of American news to May 7, will suffice: "The warlike zeal of the New-England Abolitionists is subsiding. The treatment their soldiers 'met with at Baltimore has contributed to this result.' *Le Pays* steadily ignores, as a part of the loyal United States, the little district lying west of the Hudson. Such is the little Southern organ in France. If its Southern employers give anything better than Mississippi bonds for its music, they pay their paper debt.

Mr. Seward's letter to Mr. Dayton is the theme of general comment here, as well as in England. It puts us in right position—recovers, in a sort, with European Governments and peoples the position that our Government seemed to them a month ago to be losing, not to say voluntarily relinquishing. But the brave words of this letter must be acted up to, and that specially, as they will be more words of American stamp and doctrine—merely words with the mass, but with the rulers of Europe. Their sympathies are with our principles, but their opinions and practical action are, and must be, shaped on facts. As a Power among the Great Powers, as a Government, the United States had sunk lamentably within the past six months in European estimation. If the accidental and constitutional embarrassments and checks that hampered our President's vigorous action were almost lost sight of for a moment by your New-Yorkers, how can it be expected that foreigners are to make due allowance for them? They do not, cannot, must not be asked to understand the theory of our Constitution. Within a fortnight I have heard myself one of the first living English statesmen, the first President of advanced liberal English statesmen, Mr. Richard Cobden, who knows something of the country by reading and by personal observation as a traveler here, whose sympathies are all with the North, talk about the actual political "situation" of America in terms which a Massachusetts boy of ten years old would be, and properly, spanked for uttering—not in the Boston boy's case because of their *incrimination*, but because of the ignorance of our Constitution that they betrayed, in excusable even at his tender age. It is no offense of the laws of social intercourse—the least pardonable of all offenses not punished by the tribunals of justice—to mention this. For Mr. Cobden asks every-where without reference or care for involuntary bystanders' ears, with the sincerity of a devotee, and in the innocence of ignorance, such questions as these: "What is the Government of the United States fighting for? Why 'did not your President recognize' at the outset the 'independence' of the seceding States?"

Not explanations of the theory and lawful practice of a nation's constitution; the oldest and soundest of public relations instructions to foreign residents on the ethical side, not practically do now. The United States flag floating like at Harper's Ferry, Gosport Navy-Yard, and Richmond will do, and alone will do. The world and its rulers, John Smith and Lord John Russell, Louis Durand or Jacques Bonhomme and Louis Napoleon, will do, and must judge from facts, and act accordingly.

Louis Napoleon long ago, like a sensible man as he is, sent M. Barrot and other "shrewd observers" to the United States. Their reports will weigh quite as much with him as any representations of our Minister near his Court. Be sure of that. They will report facts. His Majesty is in no hurry to acknowledge the C. S. A. as a new-born nation. He has not gone, openly, quite as far as England in this direction; it depends upon us that he does not go as far. If Mr. Davis concerns C. S. A. and Co., can he sign up six months longer, and under its own flag a pound of cotton, or where it can receive, under any flag, a pound of powder, the firm will be practically recognized as doing a living business by the European establishments. Be sure of this. History is the guaranty of my assertion.

A word about a personal matter here. It has been stated in *The Tribune* and other American journals, that Mr. Faulkner presented the Commissioners of the C. S. A. to the Emperor, and to his Minister of Foreign Affairs, M. Thouvenot. I must

think that your "positive informant" was mistaken in this matter. That Mr. Faulkner, lamentably misled here, as others at home with less excuse than he, had what dyed-call-me, and Palmerston's swaggering laudation of his reforms, and poor bankrupt banker Mirra his stockjobbing puffs to the contrary notwithstanding.

No better off than the priest Sultan at Stamboul is the Pontiff king at Rome. As I said more than a year ago, it will be a good time to talk about the French garrison leaving Rome when it leaves. Setting aside as of no particular weight in a reasonable man's judgment, the late daily crowding reports of negotiations for its departure, nothing in the historical future remains clearer than the steadily, fatally approaching fact of its departure. When to be finally accomplished, I cannot tell better than another, but certainly to be accomplished, is now past doubt; and the approach toward accomplishment may be said much more than six months of chronological advancement in the last six months. After Rome comes Venice—long after, probably, but certainly, and to judge from present appearances, without delay.

All Southern Italy is still a long way from patriotic unification with Northern Italy, but a much longer way from Neapolitan Bourgeoisism and insane Muratism. Poor middle-headed, over-grown Prince Murat in the shape of letters to unknown Neapolitan nobles, and in his little speech and silly vote in the French Senate a month or two ago, set himself forward and up as a pretender to the Neapolitan Throne. Now, Murat was Grand Master of all French Free Masons, whose vote it has been for many years to choose as their chief a member of the reigning family. Hearing Murat's foolish pretensions to the Neapolitan Throne offended many of them. This sense of offense was expressed in a Masonic journal, which, thereupon, Grand-Master Murat rather arbitrarily suspended. A new election for Grand-Master came on last week. Prince Napoleon was proposed as a candidate. At first P. N. declined, on the ground that he could not give up his friend and relative, P. M. Montaigne, P. M. and P. N. fell into such conflict of opinions that a duel between them was arranged by seconds, and put a stop to—by high Imperial command, say some, by the peculiar views of Prince Napoleon in respect of physical exposure of the person, say others. Be that as it may, the Prince Napoleon did not use this opportunity to obtain the reputation, which circumstances have steadily throughout his life prevented his acquiring, of a physically brave man; but the Prince Napoleon did, all the same, obtain the majority of votes, and is to-day, for want of a better, and in way of protest against the political absurdities of Murat, Grand-Master of all French Free Masons.

More amusement and a louder guffaw, as well as a finer universal smile of mockery, were raised in Paris and in all literary France and Europe, a week ago, by the choice of M. Thiers by his fellow-members of the French Academy, as most deserving of all living French writers of the Imperial prize of 20,000 francs decreed to be biennially allotted to the author of the work "most creditable to the human mind"—("le plus honore l'esprit humain.") To understand the depth of the French guffaw and the extent of the mocking sneers, a word of explanation is necessary. This 20,000 francs prize is of the Emperor's giving. It is biennial. Each of the five Academies composing the French Institute is, in turn, to designate the most deserving candidate for the prize. The patent meaning of this arrangement is that the specially literary Academy should propose a laureate peculiarly meritorious, on purely literary grounds—the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences, a candidate peculiarly deserving in its specialty, and so on through the five Academies, representing in all every possible department of action that "honors the human intelligence." No definite statute could have made more plain than the naturally implied *convenances* made it, that the nominating Academy would not, could not, must not, propose one of its own members for the prize. The choice of a nominee this year belonged to the *Academie Francaise*, the literary Academy par excellence. The proposed candidate was George Sand, Henri Martin, and Jules Simon. Of these three, the two who presented the strongest claims to the Academy were George Sand, the novelist, and Henri Martin, the historian. Of these two, the literary claims of Madame George Sand are undoubtedly the first and highest. But votes were about equally divided among the three. Personal, political, and "doctrinaire" prejudices had much greater weight with the gravest of the Academicians than the interests and honor of French literature, which they are specially constituted to foster and protect. Unable, after several meetings and much speaking-making by the advocates of the different candidates, to come to a decisive vote on any of them, they all agreed to vote on the subject of the work most creditable to the human intellect, to wit, of the 18 volume chronicle of the Consulate and the Empire—a clear, alarmingly voluminous, easily readable, often erroneous in statement, and supremely unphilosophical, and (so far as style in the French, above all, in the French Academical, sense of the word goes) ill-written, one-sided, popular story of France from 1804 to 1815! The *Academie Francaise*, fortunately for French literature, is so preoccupied with political and party purposes as to be fast running itself as an authoritative literary tribunal. One of its first and greatest members, Guizot—Protestant Guizot—would to-day vote any literary crown to Veillou or the Pope sooner than to Victor Hugo.

But let us look to ourselves. Plant, plant, plant! English crops will be short. French crops have been seriously injured, and saved, save, save, save! It was a sound, wise, patriotic, and politico-economic cry, uttered the other day by *THE TRIBUNE* to the numberless households where it is a daily or weekly welcome guest, for the "womankind," who stay at home in this war-time, to plant, if but one hill of corn. Save now, every grain of corn. One needs to have seen and studied the forced waste economy of these European folk, to appreciate and regret the fearful aggregate of our American wastefulness of God's good gifts. I think I take no risk, when I venture to say that all the vegetable nutriment in grains and greens of French Brittany was less this past year than what our Western farmers and Eastern housewives, spendthrifts of their field and garden yield, wasted and let waste. If, in addition to the "hill of corn," every reader of *THE TRIBUNE* will supply a little French economy to saving every spoonful of meal, she will contribute her easy contribution to the essentially "Patriotic Fund" of the country.

of Europe neutral. Not a very strong position that! The Turkey sick man was never worse than he is to-day. Haiti what dyed-call-me, and Palmerston's swaggering laudation of his reforms, and poor bankrupt banker Mirra his stockjobbing puffs to the contrary notwithstanding.

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All Southern Italy is still a long way from patriotic unification with Northern Italy, but a much longer way from Neapolitan Bourgeoisism and insane Muratism. Poor middle-headed, over-grown Prince Murat in the shape of letters to unknown Neapolitan nobles, and in his little speech and silly vote in the French Senate a month or two ago, set himself forward and up as a pretender to the Neapolitan Throne. Now, Murat was Grand Master of all French Free Masons, whose vote it has been for many years to choose as their chief a member of the reigning family. Hearing Murat's foolish pretensions to the Neapolitan Throne offended many of them. This sense of offense was expressed in a Masonic journal, which, thereupon, Grand-Master Murat rather arbitrarily suspended. A new election for Grand-Master came on last week. Prince Napoleon was proposed as a candidate. At first P. N. declined, on the ground that he could not give up his friend and relative, P. M. Montaigne, P. M. and P. N. fell into such conflict of opinions that a duel between them was arranged by seconds, and put a stop to—by high Imperial command, say some, by the peculiar views of Prince Napoleon in respect of physical exposure of the person, say others. Be that as it may, the Prince Napoleon did not use this opportunity to obtain the reputation, which circumstances have steadily throughout his life prevented his acquiring, of a physically brave man; but the Prince Napoleon did, all the same, obtain the majority of votes, and is to-day, for want of a better, and in way of protest against the political absurdities of Murat, Grand-Master of all French Free Masons.

More amusement and a louder guffaw, as well as a finer universal smile of mockery, were raised in Paris and in all literary France and Europe, a week ago, by the choice of M. Thiers by his fellow-members of the French Academy, as most deserving of all living French writers of the Imperial prize of 20,000 francs decreed to be biennially allotted to the author of the work "most creditable to the human mind"—("le plus honore l'esprit humain.") To understand the depth of the French guffaw and the extent of the mocking sneers, a word of explanation is necessary. This 20,000 francs prize is of the Emperor's giving. It is biennial. Each of the five Academies composing the French Institute is, in turn, to designate the most deserving candidate for the prize. The patent meaning of this arrangement is that the specially literary Academy should propose a laureate peculiarly meritorious, on purely literary grounds—the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences, a candidate peculiarly deserving in its specialty, and so on through the five Academies, representing in all every possible department of action that "honors the human intelligence." No definite statute could have made more plain than the naturally implied *convenances* made it, that the nominating Academy would not, could not, must not, propose one of its own members for the prize. The choice of a nominee this year belonged to the *Academie Francaise*, the literary Academy par excellence. The proposed candidate was George Sand, Henri Martin, and Jules Simon. Of these three, the two who presented the strongest claims to the Academy were George Sand, the novelist, and Henri Martin, the historian. Of these two, the literary claims of Madame George Sand are undoubtedly the first and highest. But votes were about equally divided among the three. Personal, political, and "doctrinaire" prejudices had much greater weight with the gravest of the Academicians than the interests and honor of French literature, which they are specially constituted to foster and protect. Unable, after several meetings and much speaking-making by the advocates of the different candidates, to come to a decisive vote on any of them, they all agreed to vote on the subject of the work most creditable to the human intellect, to wit, of the 18 volume chronicle of the Consulate and the Empire—a clear, alarmingly voluminous, easily readable, often erroneous in statement, and supremely unphilosophical, and (so far as style in the French, above all, in the French Academical, sense of the word goes) ill-written, one-sided, popular story of France from 1804 to 1815! The *Academie Francaise*, fortunately for French literature, is so preoccupied with political and party purposes as to be fast running itself as an authoritative literary tribunal. One of its first and greatest members, Guizot—Protestant Guizot—would to-day vote any literary crown to Veillou or the Pope sooner than to Victor Hugo.

But let us look to ourselves. Plant, plant, plant! English crops will be short. French crops have been seriously injured, and saved, save, save, save! It was a sound, wise, patriotic, and politico-economic cry, uttered the other day by *THE TRIBUNE* to the numberless households where it is a daily or weekly welcome guest, for the "womankind," who stay at home in this war-time, to plant, if but one hill of corn. Save now, every grain of corn. One needs to have seen and studied the forced waste economy of these European folk, to appreciate and regret the fearful aggregate of our American wastefulness of God's good gifts. I think I take no risk, when I venture to say that all the vegetable nutriment in grains and greens of French Brittany was less this past year than what our Western farmers and Eastern housewives, spendthrifts of their field and garden yield, wasted and let waste. If, in addition to the "hill of corn," every reader of *THE TRIBUNE* will supply a little French economy to saving every spoonful of meal, she will contribute her easy contribution to the essentially "Patriotic Fund" of the country.

FROM FORTRESS MONROE.

A Day and Night of Alarms and Adventures—Gen. Butler's Plans—The Troops—Arrival of Gen. Pierce—Expedition—A Court-Martial.

From Our Special Correspondent.

FORTRESS MONROE, OLD POINT, June 4, 1861.

After I had posted my letter yesterday, we had a batch of rumors and some excitement. About 4 o'clock word was brought in from Camp Butler that one hundred and twenty men, belonging to Col. Allen's regiment, who had gone out a distance of some four or five miles toward Yorktown, had been surprised by a rebel force of five hundred men, and taken prisoners. Gen. Butler immediately repaired to the Camp, and ordered a detachment from Col. Duryee's regiment of Zouaves to go in pursuit, and they set out at once. It subsequently appeared that the report was without foundation. In the evening word was brought that five hundred Rebel troops, with ten pieces of artillery, were at the Bethel Church, between eight and ten miles from Hampton, and not far from the Half-Way House. Another report placed them at another church on Back River. Gen. Butler resolved to send a force in that direction, consequently about five hundred men, commanded by Capt. Haggerty of Gen. Butler's staff, and ten 21-pound Howitzers set out. They scored the country as far as Howitzers, a distance of about ten miles, but found no enemy—no sign of one. The expedition returned about noon to-day. It is probable that between Old Point and Yorktown there are some fifteen hundred or two thousand Rebels, in nomadic bands, indifferently armed. On the approach of the scouts they retire, and burn the bridges, with such other exploits as the F. F. V.'s are capable of, when disguised as guerrillas.

At Yorktown, there are probably, of all sorts, some 2,500 or 3,000 men, most of whom are poorly armed. All the negroes who have not run, and many of the

white men, have been pressed into the service of the insurgents at that point. The provisions of the country have been scooped up for them to live on, and it will not be long before the supply will give out. Everybody's property which the Rebels can make useful to their purposes has been seized—otherwise stolen.

I am assured by intelligent Union men who have escaped from their clutches that at least one-half of the population of the region of country below Yorktown are for the Union, and would haul our army with joy.

I have to-day made an excursion to a section of country not far from Hampton, where there are a number of Union families, now enjoying the protection of our troops. They confirm all the reports I have heretofore given concerning the condition of the country between Hampton and Yorktown. They are all sufferers—many of them having lost their all at the hands of the insurgents. Several men have been compelled to flee, and leave their wives and children, as well as their property, belied to the tender mercies of the Rebels. They implore Gen. Butler to make an advance at the earliest possible moment. The General is not unmindful of them; but will redress their wrongs just as soon as is consistent with his plans. As to those plans, they will be unfolded at no very distant day, when it will be found that every movement has had a relation to the ultimate result, which is consequently held in view. Gen. Butler is a man of action. Not a day will be thrown away, but every day and hour will contribute to the execution of a scheme which has been formed with deliberation, and with what skill you may conjecture, when I state that it has the warm approval of Lieut.-Gen. Scott.

The forces here are gaining in efficiency, discipline, and soldierly qualities, and when the time arrives for striking the blow, they will be found equal to the work. Brigadier-General Pierce arrived here yesterday, and has established his headquarters at the Seminary near Hampton. His staff is composed of Captain S. P. Richmond, Capt. W. C. Lovering, Capt. A. P. Chamberlain. Gen. Pierce will relieve Col. Duryee as the officer in command at Camp Butler.

A detachment of twenty men of the Cambridge Company, out of Col. Woodruff's 3d Massachusetts Regt., embarked on a steamer last evening for Havre de Grace, on a special duty. The nature of it will be learned before this gets into print. The Yankee, when about to be dispatched on a special service last night, got aground, and did not get off till to-day. It turned out, however, that the circumstance did not mar any general or particular plan of action.

A court-martial will commence to-morrow to try soldiers charged with plundering citizens at Newport News. Gen. Butler does not intend that acts of violence or lawlessness shall escape punishment, as the result will show.

Negroes, in search of information, continue to struggle into our camps and the fortresses. All such take the appellation of Virginia Volunteers. The idea pleased them wonderfully. "Massa run away first, and did child had to look out for his self," say they. And such is the fact in most cases.

The Contrabands sailed last night with between 200 and 300 of the Naval Brigade. The others remain to await developments. They drift with a rugged current.

In consequence of the alarms and expeditions yesterday, the discipline in the camps to-day is very strict. No man, either here or at Newport News, will hereafter be allowed to go outside of the lines without permission or unless he is sent out on special duty. The insurgents who intend the country between this and Yorktown will, one of these days, be "gobbled up" in a manner little to their liking.

FROM MARYLAND.

Re-assembling of the Rebel Legislature: re-assembly of the Highlanders and Mainiacs—Capt. McConnell's Regiment—Marshal Bonifant's Revelations—Necessity of Suppressing the Police—Election Prospects.

From Our Special Correspondent.

BALTIMORE, JUNE 4, 1861.

The rebel Legislature of Maryland are to meet at Frederick City to-day, as per adjournment, for the purpose of embracing the Federal Government in its war against the Jeff. Davis gang of traitors. It is an illegal body, and should be just as promptly suppressed by the President as he would a regiment of rebels in arms. It will find a Federal force in the occupancy of Frederick, to look after its treason. But this is not all. It will doubtless go to work to pass laws injurious to the interests of the State, and Gov. Hicks, if he had the courage of a mouse, would scatter it to the winds of heaven, and the masses would sustain him in so holy a work. I trust that this hot-bed of traitors will not be allowed to mock both heaven and earth with its blasphemous treason, but that it will be summarily dealt with by the strong arm of the military power. Loyalty should be as prompt in doing right as treason in carrying out its iniquitous purposes.

A refreshing shower of rain welcomed the debarking of the Highlanders on Broadway, where the Philadelphia cars cross it, last evening about 7 1/2 o'clock. Their reception by the inhabitants